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ABSTRACT

The aim of this newsletter, published twice a year by the office of Institutional Planning and Research at Seattle Central Community College (Washington), is to help Seattle Central faculty and staff gain access to the institutional data they need, and to help them link and integrate their various planning and assessment activities without altering the individual initiative that sparks them. This spring 2001 issue offers the following articles: (1) "What's Happening at Curriculum Review," by L. Kempen; (2) "Planning Progress: It's in Our Mission, It's in Our Plan," by T. Leimer; (3) "The First Critical Moments Seminar," by T. Young; (4) "Counselors Offer Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Students," by R. Apacible and K. McRae; (5) "One Potato, Two Potato: Creating a Library Instruction Assessment Plan," by L. Kanne; (6) "Document Imaging Clears Clutter and Halts Ping-Ponging," by G. Randolph; (7) "New Student Orientation: S.T.A.R. Gets Academy Award," by R. Kline and T. McGinty; (8) "Biotechnology Adapts to Changing Environment," by M. Burnett; (9) "Career Task Force Takes Presentation to Classroom," by C. Kirk; (10) "Getting Perspective on the Math/Humanities Link," an interview with three instructors; and (11) "English Department Retreat: Ideas for Retaining Students," by D. Cole. This fall 2001 issue includes: (1) "Update from the Curriculum Review Committee," by L. Kempen; (2) "The Retention Response Team: From the Perspective of Student Success," by K. Michaelson; (3) "How Decisions Are Made to Implement Technology in Enrollment Services," by C. Williams; (4) "Responding to the Student Voice: Using Assessment to Improve Technical-Professional Programs," by B. Groeschell; (5) "Just in Time: Feedback Via the Web," by F. LePeintre; (6) "Responsiveness in Action: Student Feedback in the Critical Moments Seminar," by L. Blue; (7) "Connecting with Online Students," by S. Hai-Jew; (8) "SCCD Title VIA International Studies and Foreign Languages Grant: Globalization of the Curriculum Project," by T. Young; (9) "More than You Counted On: Assessment of the Title III Technology Grant," by V. Bystrom; and (10) "Perceptions of International Students in a Community College-Based Coordinated Studies Program," by A. Insley. (NB)

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Seattle Central Questions: Institutional and Educational Effectiveness, 2001

Editors
Valerie Bystrom
Laurie Kempen

Spr-Fall 2001

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Institutional and Educational Effectiveness
Spring 2001

Thanks!

Thank you, Michael Pham for naming this newsletter!

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by Tina Leimer

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Mission, Values & Learning Outcomes

Staff

- Valerie Bystrom
  Editor
- Tina Leimer
  Director of Planning & Research
- Irena Kulik
  Program Coordinator

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View From the Director's Chair

Tina Leimer

One of the things that impressed me when I came to Seattle Central two years ago was that most people here are not afraid of assessment and evaluation; they like to see data (quantitative and qualitative) and use it. They want to know what's working and what isn't. To know whether their effort is producing positive results. That's an enviable atmosphere for a Director of Planning and Research. Unlike many of my counterparts across the U.S., whose ongoing cry is "how do I get them to pay attention to the data," I don't have to spend time convincing people that evaluation is valuable, or that numbers aren't necessarily painful. Instead, I spend time trying to figure out, "how do I get them all the data they want!"

A second observation about our college: "continuous improvement" efforts are plentiful, but not systematic or integrated and often not documented. From an institution-wide perspective, the activity is isolated and not communicated, so the effect isn't broadly seen or felt. That makes it hard for us to learn from each other or build on each other's work. It's difficult for accreditors and external constituents to see our progress, and for us to use it in recruitment, promotion, and marketing. Without integration, our effort doesn't add up to show powerful evidence of our college's success.

Those are the reasons for this newsletter. It's a tool to help us link and integrate our various planning and assessment activities without altering the individual initiative that sparks them. And it's a way to recognize and celebrate the "continuous improvement" aspect of our college culture.

Our newsletter's subtitle is Institutional and Educational Effectiveness. That's accreditation lingo for "continuous improvement." Always asking ourselves how we're doing things better and how we know we are. It's an ongoing cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, (breathe), assessment, planning, implementation, (breathe), assessment…. To quote from the official source, the Accreditation Handbook, "Through its planning process the institution asks questions, seeks answers, analyzes itself, and revises its goals, policies, procedures, and resource allocation."

That's why we named our newsletter, Central Questions. In its active sense, it says that Seattle Central seeks answers. In the noun sense, the questions we're asking are essential ones, central ones. Thanks to all of you who played our name game. Special kudos to Michael Pham in our Transportation Department. Michael submitted the winning name, earning him $50 and everlasting fame and recognition.

Many thanks to Valerie Bystrom for putting together our first issue of Central Questions, to Irena Kulik for creating our online evaluation form, to Hugh Miller for developing our online format, and to all of our article contributors. In the upcoming year, Laurie Kempen will edit this newsletter and serve as the State Assessment Liaison. I'm pleased that Laurie and I will be working together. Since she chairs the Curriculum Review Committee, it will be another way to strengthen the ties between our many effectiveness activities.

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What's Happening at Curriculum Review

by Laurie Kempen

The Curriculum Review Committee has two primary functions: reviewing new or revised courses and evaluating existing programs. This quarter has been a busy one with two new and nine revised courses as well as a major program review, one of the lengthiest the committee has seen in years. The new courses were two versions of Education 201-in stand-alone and on-line formats. Tony Ogilvie proposed these courses, and they are based on those offered within the education department at Washington State University. Wadiyah Nelson and a group of counselors have submitted revisions of several human development courses, such as Math Study Strategies and Listening and Lecture Note-taking Strategies. These courses will now be available to students for one credit of AA elective. Previously, they were grouped together for more credits. In addition, Kaori Yoshida has revised the course outlines for all Japanese courses, bringing them up-to-date, while Nat Wilson has done the same for Drama 112, an ASL Theatre course.

Our program review this quarter was of the World Languages Program, which includes American Sign Language, Spanish, French, German, and Japanese. Since each of these languages functions as a separate department, there were five reports with a general introduction to them all. The committee found the combined report very well organized and praised the program for being accessible, diverse, and innovative. They were impressed with the high quality of the whole program, especially by the high quality maintained in those parts which are run entirely by adjunct faculty, such as German and Japanese.

One primary task of the CRC this quarter has been to streamline the course establishment process. The committee has worked hard to find ways to reduce the paperwork necessary for establishing new courses. Previously, faculty members had to complete a separate form for each AA requirement they felt their course met. Each one required an additional signature from their associate dean, as well as repetition of their personal information (which is already on the initial course establishment form). Although we still require short explanations detailing how the course will meet various requirements, separate forms are no longer necessary.

In addition, it was previously unclear how much faculty needed to submit if they were simply changing the mode of delivery of a course. We have specified exactly what is needed for various changes. For example, if a course is merely changed from correspondence to online and there is no content change, only the top portion of the establishment form need be filled out. As for all courses, one must still include a copy of the course outline and an example of a syllabus for the records, as well as the state-required course coding form.

We currently have one of our new members, Michael Taylor, working on revising the CRC website, http://www.sccd.ctc.edu/~cccuric, originally developed by Lawrence Morales. Michael is deleting forms which will no longer be necessary, and adding links which will simply the application process. All of the changes should be uploaded by the beginning of Fall Quarter, if not sooner.

We are proud to announce the relatively new membership of our second student representative, Alix Petti. Alix, a business student here at SCCC, takes minutes during all of our meetings as well as contributing her student's perspective to our discussions. She is an invaluable asset to the committee. Minutes from all of our meetings are available in the public folders under Central/Curriculum Review Committee.

Our last meeting of the quarter will be Wednesday, June 6 in room BE4119. New courses to be taught in the spring of 2002 need to be submitted by October 16, 2001. Business meetings next quarter will take place on October 3, November 7, and December 5. The library program will be

reviewed in the fall. Dates for submission and oral review of the report have not yet been determined. Lori Miller and Jennifer Moore will be co-chairing that review.

If you have any questions regarding the Curriculum Review Committee, please do not hesitate to contact Laurie Kempen at lkempe@sccd.ctc.edu.

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Planning Progress
It's in our Mission, It's in our Plan

by Tina Leimer

Prompted by results from the CCSEQ, a student survey initially conducted in Fall 1996, Seattle Central is engaged in a massive structural planning process. After reviewing the survey findings, our planning became an exercise in organizational introspection and assessment. More than 100 faculty, managerial and classified staff, administrators and students spent 18 months questioning processes, roles and the campus culture via retreats, college-wide forums, planning committees, focus groups, and follow-up surveys. It was an enormous undertaking.

Our Student Services departments were ignited by the survey findings. They poured their hearts into making changes, even before the other planning committees made their recommendations. When the CCSEQ was conducted again in Fall 1999, some of the results suggested that our student services efforts and the massive awareness and concern permeating our campus has made a difference already.

For instance, there was a huge jump in the percentage of students who felt the counselors, advisors and secretaries are helpful, considerate and knowledgeable (48% in 1996, 56% in 1999). This increased satisfaction happened at the same time that there was a large rise in the percentage of students who reported using counseling/advising services. Students were feeling better about our instruction and our college environment too. Compared to 1996, a substantially higher percentage of students in 1999 said that our courses were challenging, stimulating and worthwhile, and that our college is a stimulating, exciting place to be.

In December 2000, all planning committees made their recommendations. Goals, objectives, and some strategies, were written into a formal plan that is regularly adapted to ongoing changes. The Steering Committee that guided the planning process through the exploration stage was reorganized as the Coordinating Team. People needed a rest (this process has been exhausting) and re-aligning would logistically and symbolically move us into the next phase of our planning--putting our strategies to work and monitoring them. Committees were reorganized into Work Groups, Task Forces, and Teams.

The Coordinating Team (C.T.) includes our President, group leaders--most of whom are mid-level managers or faculty members, classified staff and a few other employees to assure cross-college representation. The C.T. is chaired by the Director of Planning & Research. We always try for student representation on committees. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. In this case, it hasn't.

The Coordinating Team's purpose is to coordinate and integrate the planning activities, to assure that changes made in one area of the college are known in others that might be affected. C.T. members are charged with keeping momentum going, monitoring progress, and reshaping the structure or process as needed to accomplish change.

Work Groups, Task Forces and Teams develop strategies and, to the extent feasible, implement them. Each group is organized around a single goal in the plan. Depending on their particular tasks, pace, level of activity, and working style, the membership and activities differ.

Our planning structure is flexible, and changes with the needs and challenges that arise. Some groups may disband once they've developed strategies, which will be taken on and implemented by the appropriate department. Some groups will work with other groups, develop alliances, and build college-wide support through forums, workshops and presentations at other committee or departmental meetings.

Several of our goals require cross-boundary initiatives, so they can't be the responsibility of a particular department. They must be acted on by the college community as a whole if they are to be achieved. The Coordinating Team and the planning groups are responsible for building and sustaining this broad support.

Our planning process is dynamic and responsive to its participants and to new information. We try to let the structure and our formal document follow the natural ebb and flow of our process, and we keep a written record so we know where we've been. As new strategies are developed, we write them in. About twice each year, we write in our progress on those strategies, as well as any relevant measurements or outcomes. The updates are reviewed by the C.T., the President's Executive Cabinet, posted in our public folders and communicated to the college community by our President at college-wide events and in the *Communique*.

In the upcoming year, the Coordinating Team will review different types of surveys for potential use, set benchmarks, and develop mechanisms to gauge our progress. We'll keep building collaborative webs throughout our college community, and reshaping our structure to pursue our quest for improvement.

To keep you up-to-date, *Planning Progress* will be a regular feature with each issue written by one of our planning group leaders.

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The First Critical Moments Seminar Successfully Piloted by Carmen Perez and Shah Jing Song

by Tina Young

With the population of people of color nearing 20%, a critical challenge in Washington State is to improve persistence and program completion among students of color and other underrepresented students in public higher education. Critical Moments is a retention, awareness, and change project for students of color, other underrepresented students, and the institutions they attend. The project prepares students, faculty members, and administrators to respond proactively to campus and classroom events that involve issues of race, gender, class and other differences through detailed discussion of in-depth, five page case studies based on extensive interviews of individual students. Critical Moments is a particularly powerful complement to the many existing strategies for improving campus climates for diversity and retention because it empowers students to act on behalf of themselves and their communities.

The first of three planned pilot seminars using a Critical Moments Case Story curriculum was held Winter Quarter 2001 and taught by two members of the SCCC Critical Moments Team, Carmen Perez, and Shah Jing Song. The development of the Critical Moments course, as both a content/knowledge based and skills based curriculum, is an ongoing project. The pairing of a faculty member familiar with teaching methodologies and a staff member versed in student services, and both with experience in facilitating dialogues was an intentional design to strengthen the goals of the curriculum.

The eleven students participating in the Winter Quarter Pilot Seminar had been recruited by Critical Moments Team members and other interested and supportive faculty and staff members. The students were enrolled in HUM 299, Special Problems in the Humanities, offered through the Humanities and Social Sciences Division. They earned two credits through, each week, attending one hour of class and writing extensive journal entries. The class met on Monday afternoons from 1:00 pm-1:50 pm in BE 3114. Funded by the Lockwood Foundation, a booklet containing eleven case stories was produced and distributed to the students. Since winter quarters traditionally have a number of holidays that fall on Mondays, this decreased the number of times the class met and impacted the delivery of the curriculum. Only eight of the eleven case stories were covered.

At the beginning of the quarter, students were asked to complete a Student Profile Form. During the first class, Codes of Conduct were developed and agreed upon to serve as guidelines for the students' participation. For each case story that was assigned, questions were prepared by the two seminar facilitators to encourage student dialogue and to increase their abilities in critical thinking, problem solving, social interaction, and textual analysis. At the end of the quarter, an evaluation form was distributed and collected.

The student evaluations reflected development in a number of specific skill arenas and progress toward the goals of the Critical Moments project. Listening, perspective-taking, and empathizing were skills that students identified as part of their learning experiences from the course. Through the problem-solving activities, students gained concrete college success strategies. They also offered suggestions to improve the course and curriculum.

Two meetings to evaluate the course were held after the close of the quarter. The following summarizes the facilitators' feedback, evaluations, and suggestions based on their experience of teaching the first pilot seminar:

General Feedback

- Start the first class with a discussion and development of a "Codes of Conduct" document. Carefully review the course description and expectations, the journal writing guidelines, and writing assignments with the students, and explain that the course is a pilot seminar with a curriculum that will be further developed and refined.

- Co-facilitators should meet prior to each class to review the case story, prepare questions, assignments, etc. It is important to clarify at the beginning of the hour what skills the class will be addressing or will try to focus upon.
- Students should be discouraged from reading the entire casebook ahead of time.
- The Winter Quarter class was all female (after the lone male student moved out of town) and this created a particular dynamic in the dialogues. The next class should be more balanced, at least in gender.
- Though attendance was stressed as part of the grade, there were a few days where enough students were absent that it impacted class dialogue. To be successful, there should be at least twelve students enrolled in the class.

Curriculum

- In the first two weeks, it is important to assess where these students are, i.e., their general level of understanding of issues of diversity. This will determine which case stories to assign. From student feedback and from the facilitators' perspectives, some stories were too elementary for this particular group. More complex case stories will strengthen the curriculum. It was helpful designating stories with one to three stars to indicate degree of complexity.
- In both their writing and in discussion, students should be encouraged to first focus on what are the issues in the case story.
- The course should be constructed to have two writing assignments--a one-page response paper due prior to the class, and then a one-page reflection paper written after the class dialogue. Use single sheets of paper instead of spiral notebooks to make it easier to collect each week.
- A student services/student success strategies assignment would reinforce one of the secondary goals of Critical Moments - to encourage students to utilize services on campus. These need to be highlighted, i.e. math tutors, career advising, etc., especially during Fall Quarter.
- Provide supplemental reading material, i.e., "Assumption about Gender Role Conflict and Sexism." Facilitators need to introduce and explain terminology and concepts of racism, class, marginalization, identity development, etc. A framework or introductory theoretical foundation for many of the issues raised will help in the reading of the case stories.
- Students need a base of knowledge so that they can identify when things happen to them. Learning the "isms" will help students develop tools to respond to issues of diversity and expand their vocabularies; it will also facilitate their understanding of diversity and help them develop strategies for success in their college careers.
- Both the facilitators and students strongly recommended that the class meet at least twice a week or for a two-hour block of time--one day or hour to go over concepts, terminology, etc. or possibly to show a video, i.e., Native Tongue for an ESL case story; the second day or hour for case story deconstruction, reconstruction. After arriving at one level of understanding of the issues raised and the factors involved, there was often insufficient time to work through to a deeper comprehension of the complexity of the story, i.e., "Between a Rock and a Hard Place."
- For this class, the level of skills that were outlined as goals did not start coming together until the end of the quarter. Some of the more emotion-laden classes did enable students to work on negotiation skills, perspective taking, and developing empathy. These classes also introduced new success strategies and validated strategies that students have already employed.
- Sometimes there was not much difference of opinion in the dialogue. Facilitators found that the more challenging a case story, the more it triggers a greater range of thought and opinion.
- Over the summer, it will be important to continue developing the curriculum. The two teams of co-facilitators and other Critical Moments team members will meet to review the course, revise the curriculum, and prepare for the Fall Quarter pilot seminar.

Team Teaching

- Team teaching is the preferred structure, but realistically and from an institutional point of view, the class will eventually have to be designed as a stand-alone unless we create a Coordinated Studies course or have it linked with another class, i.e. ENG 101.
- Facilitators should take turns leading the classes; one could take the lead in facilitating the class dialogue, the other could check off student participation, watch the time, try to keep people on task.
- Though participation from all students was stressed, a few did not speak that much. This is a

challenge and needs to be constantly addressed since much of the success of the class is based on student participation. Another "Facilitating Case Stories" workshop might be helpful, or a session that would explore how to encourage students to participate more actively and how to participate responsibly, i.e., becoming more aware of the amount of time they are talking, of whether or not they are on task and have a point or are just venting, etc.

Evaluation

- The Critical Moments team needs to develop a means to assess whether and how students are "empowered" after this course. Possibly incorporating the persoective of the "Untold Success Stories" project to ascertain their "successes", progress at SCCC, and achieving academic goals. This Fall 2001 the Critical Moments team will contact students from this first pilot seminar. Through a combination of a set of questions and a narrative-like interview with each student, the team hopes to assess this dimension.

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Counselors Offer Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Students

Disruptive student behavior prompted so much discussion at PAC meetings (the Planning Advisory Committee) this winter that Ric Apacible, Fran Kato, Kimberly McRae, Lori Miller, and Al Souma organized a workshop offering "Helpful Strategies for Dealing with Difficult Students." If you were not one of the forty-one administrators, staff and faculty members who attended this lively and interactive workshop on April 17, here are several timely and useful points you missed.

To begin, many members of the campus community have noticed uncivil behavior in classrooms and offices--students arriving late, nodding off, talking on cell phones, or even interrupting discussion with yelling and threats. These disruptive behaviors include any "that persistently or grossly interfere with academic and administrative activities on campus. Ordinarily, such behavior actively hampers the ability of the other students to learn and of instructors to teach. Extreme forms of this behavior may even threaten the physical safety of students and staff." A difficult student may exhibit different kinds of behaviors, characterized by the presenters as unmanageable, unusual, or so extreme as to provoke a crisis situation.

This last, the crisis, the presenters defined as "an emergency (non-medical) situation that requires immediate response for individuals experiencing social and emotional distress." If a person's behavior is very combative, aggressive, and uncontrollable, or if a person is abusive and threatens anyone's health and safety, we must call Security (ext. 5442).

The second form, unusual behavior, may or may not be critical. If a student seems suicidal or so distraught that the situation is out of control, that is a crisis, and we are advised to notify a counselor immediately. However, staff or faculty members may observe students in less critical distress. We might observe people who seem depressed, anxious, very distraught, fearful, extremely sad, or agitated; they may be crying, procrastinating excessively, uncharacteristically poorly prepared, ambivalent, or unable to make decisions. These are not disruptive behaviors, but a teacher or staff member may want to intervene. If we do so, the presenters advised finding appropriate time and space for a conversation which we might begin by telling the student what we have observed and asking the student what might be contributing to it. We must remember that such discussions with students are confidential. We can refer a student to a counselor. If we consult a counselor about the matter, however, we must not reveal a student's identity unless the student gives permission.

More probable and familiar are the first kinds, the unmanageable behaviors, which teachers and staff members often negotiate in their classrooms and offices: chronic lateness, verbal abuse, persistent interruptions, and other behaviors that go against the established norms. Many of the behaviors faculty and staff members offered as examples, McRae noted, are proscribed by rules already in place. She suggested we all familiarize ourselves with the student code of conduct, which is in the student handbook, page 39-42. (If you don't have a copy of the handbook, request one from the Student Leadership office.)

First and foremost, of course, is to make clear what behaviors are expected and remind students of the ground rules when they have been broken. McRae explained that some students come thinking, "I am just here to get what I want, and I want to get it my way," rather than understanding that the institution has its own way. Faculty members might announce in their syllabi that the class members are expected to follow the student code of conduct. A student services office might post a sign, "Students will not verbally abuse front desk clerks." Making expectations clear will itself help guide students to appropriate behavior. It also provides the faculty or staff member with a basis on which to make complaints if behaviors get out of hand. A student can be held responsible, especially when expectations have been made clear, repeatedly.

The workshop leaders offered some dos and don'ts. When commenting on disruptive behavior, remind students of the right behavior rather than confronting an individual. Rather than, "John, you

have interrupted over and over," say, "Let's call a halt to this interrupting and let her finish." Don't refer to a particular student's progress in response to disruptive behavior; do not say, "You aren't doing so well yourself . . .." Do not use valuable in-class time handling a problem but make clear that you will handle it later. Do not let the situation make you defensive because the situation then is more likely to escalate. And a final "do" is "Use the counselors." Skilled at handling just these sorts of situations, they are our best resource for strategic advice.

We must expect some students will arrive not knowing the customs of an academic culture, explained McRae. And we help them toward behaving civilly and collegially. We are all familiar with students who have difficulty not yelling when they want to make an assertion, who, in group discussion, must interrupt when something comes to mind. Our college community is an important place for helping students learn what is and what is not appropriate behavior, not among their friends, but in productive educational environments.

This article is based on Ric Apacible's report and an interview with Kimberley McRae. Thanks for your efforts!

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One Potato, Two Potato: Creating a Library Instruction Assessment Plan

by Lynn Kanne, Librarian

In 1998, the library was granted funds from Title III providing us with a lab for hands on research instruction. As cool as they are, new computers aren't an end in themselves. They must support broader instructional objectives. With this equipment and some inspiration, we planned to teach students the key skills of finding and using information. The Library's part of the Title III grant required measures of our success, including an overall increase in a set of skills collectively known as information literacy, and an increased use of the library instruction lab by other faculty. Counting classes and bodies is straightforward, but measuring information literacy is, as we have learned, more difficult.

Information Literacy is a set of interconnected abilities encompassing skills required for finding information, which might be used for employment, school or personal needs. It includes, for example, knowing where to begin researching the social history of the potato and finding the right keywords and databases to identify the articles on the great potato famine. As librarians, we do most of our teaching during single 50-minute workshops at the request of other faculty members. We tailor our teaching to the needs of each class. Workshops are designed to provide preparation for assignments students will complete soon after the workshop. We commonly see a given class only once during the quarter.

This model presents some assessment challenges. Because each class learns something different, no single survey can address the range of research skills we teach. We typically have brief contact with each class, and students may not use the skills we teach right away. The best evidence of their learning is often in work they do later.

In our first stab at assessing the impact of our new lab, we surveyed randomly selected classes across campus. To establish how information literate our students were before we did our magic, we asked students to rate themselves on their ability to use various resources in the library. Our original plan was to repeat the survey the following year to show how we had transformed Seattle Central into a hotbed of information literacy.

There was one small problem with this approach. After a year of teaching thousands of students in our new instruction lab, it dawned on us that we were trying to evaluate a sample of the entire student population when only selected students had been exposed to our teaching. It was like giving vitamins to thirty percent of Seattle's residents, and hoping the whole city would get healthier. We needed to reevaluate our methods and focus our approach on only those students we taught.

This realization brought our focus closer to our teaching, and prompted us to consider how we could use assessment to improve. We examined our teaching process. We naturally look for evidence that we are meeting our objectives in the instruction lab. This might be found in work students produce, questions they ask, or abilities they demonstrate. We incorporate this feedback from students into instructional design, dynamically weaving evaluation into instruction. As a result, we can implement improvements right on the spot.

Although this approach helps us understand what students are learning, it provides no quantitative evidence of our success-something that was promised in the language of the Title III grant application. To gather such data, we needed to continue to use some form of survey or test. In a second attempt to produce such results, we developed a survey to administer before and after library instruction. The new survey would be given only to selected classes, and we would compare the before and after results for each class. This pre/post survey gave us some information, but it was time intensive, and still inadequately addressed the wide range of research skills and levels we

teach.

Just as a broad survey would not work across the student body, we also recognized that we could not expect total information literacy from a student who had been exposed to a single workshop focused on specific skills. We needed to assess the skills we were teaching in a given workshop. Again, we were trying to measure too broadly. We added a shorter test focused on database searching, one of the most frequently taught skills in the instruction lab, to our repertoire of assessment strategies. In addition to this we also began to use a set of brief open-ended questions asking what students had learned that was new. This method provided us some valuable quantitative and qualitative results. Finally, recognizing that the primary instructor is in the best position to evaluate student learning, we asked them whether their library instruction objectives for the class had been met. Later in the quarter we followed up by asking if the library instruction made a difference in the quality of students' work.

When we began to implement an assessment plan for Title III, we started with what was written into the grant: "Increase student information competency in library courses and orientation sessions by 10% each year." This was something we probably couldn't ever document, but we eventually developed several tools to help us measure specific information literacy objectives for the students we come into contact with. When we began to ask primary faculty about their objectives, we finally found what could best measure our impact. Ask the faculty what they wanted their students to learn, and then ask them how well their students learned it. From this information combined with responses to the short open-ended questions, we can grow and improve as teachers.

We've learned to identify what we are measuring and why, and how we will use the information we gather. Time, forethought, and flexibility are essential to any assessment plan that is to provide genuinely meaningful information. Our experience forced us to revise the grant objectives, as well as our assessment plan, to help us improve our teaching. At the same time we are still able to demonstrate for the grant makers how the instruction lab has helped us develop more information-literate students at Seattle Central.

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Document Imaging Clears Clutter and Halts Ping-Ponging

by Gloria Randolph

We learned from the 1996 Community College Student Evaluation Questionnaire, from Intake 2000, from focus groups, and from the student enrollment/student success analysis of departments, that one of the biggest student complaints was our practice of "ping-ponging" our students. In the past, students were being sent from one student service office to another to retrieve records prior to their advising/registration appointments. This was a practice we wanted to stop immediately.

In Admissions and Registration our goal was to create a process that will allow instant retrieval of student documents via the web. As of Winter 2001, staff members who have approved access can retrieve student records (transcripts, evaluations, educational plans, etc) at a secured web site. Thus, counselors, advisors, records staff members, and other key individuals are able to access a student record by computer without having to search for paper documents. And they can print out documents when necessary. For an incoming student, admissions staff members scan and index records, and then alert transcript evaluators and advisers that records are available for assessment.

It takes a lot of equipment-scanners, servers, and software--to store all these records and make them available on the network. The whole ball of wax we call "document imaging." Thanks to document imaging, we can make our enrollment process more efficient and effective by reorganizing the way we conduct our record keeping process. From the admission process to the registration process student records tend to mount up, and storage and timely access can become problematic. We expect a great change in our record keeping process by Winter 2004. At that time, all records will be scanned and indexed for a period of five years, and we will be able to toss and eliminate the hard copies of documents that currently exist in registration and admissions. Some of the benefits of document imaging will be:

1. Unnecessary physical document handling will be eliminated.
2. The hard dollar cost of photocopying will decrease.
3. Office supplies will be reduced.
4. Paper clutter throughout the office will be reduced.
5. Scanned documents will be conveniently located in an electronic folder organized for easy retrieval.
6. People in different locations/offices can access student information from their desktops.
7. Records can be retrieved at Internet speed.
8. The overhead cost of looking for lost documents will be eliminated.
9. Students will be served without being "ping-ponged" around.

Thus far, the records for 4,420 students are on the network. We are looking forward to a paperless student filing system!

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New Student Orientation: S.T.A.R. Gets Academy Award

by Ron Kline and Tava McGinty

S.T.A.R.: Success, Training, Advising, and Registration. This new student orientation program, which began last fall, has taken on the appearance of a shooting star. The combined efforts of staff members working in first floor student services offices have carried this new program to successes beyond their expectations.

Over the last five years, discussions about a new student orientation program have occurred in almost every retreat, forum, and planning day held at the college. These discussions identified many of the ways a program such as STAR would benefit both students and the college. Better recruiting, increased enrollment, improved retention, reduced student confusion, all these things would happen if we had an orientation program. Last summer, the offices of student services--Admissions, Advising, Registration, Testing--and the counselors collaborated on the development of this new opportunity to introduce students to the campus.

The STAR program was integrated into the student intake process as student services moved into a more streamlined, technologically oriented method of getting new students from the front door to the classroom. Testing became computerized and available on demand, admission applications and transcript processing became digital, and student records could be instantly reviewed. These updates in technology provided the fuel for the creation of STAR.

Organized around an interactive PowerPoint presentation that gives students the tools for success, the STAR sessions are coordinated by Tava McGinty of the Advising Office. She keeps the presentation current, works with the Facilities Office to ensure the space is adequate and set up properly, coordinates the advisors' and counselors' schedules, and works with the Registration Office staff on attendance and electronic records issues.

Here is how the orientation proceeds:

- As new students arrive for their STAR appointments, the Registration staff greets them and assists with the check-in process. Students verify their appointments, provide information that will be used in registering, and receive the quarterly class schedules they will use to build their personal schedules.

- While students wait for the PowerPoint presentation to begin, guest speakers take a few minutes to promote their programs or classes. Representatives from Student Leadership make regular appearances, which have proven to be of great benefit to new students, easing their registration anxieties. And at information tables, students can browse through class advertisements, read the Student Handbook, check out vocational program brochures, and review campus resource bulletins.

- The students are then officially welcomed, and the PowerPoint presentation begins with a comprehensive look at Seattle Central Community College and the many resources that it offers students. The presentation is designed with four distinct segments, conveniently titled Success, Training, Advising, and Registration! The Success segment introduces the appropriate campus resources and tools students will use that will help them achieve success in the classroom. Time management, being prepared for class, having the necessary materials, where to get help--all these topics are covered as students learn how to be successful.

- The Training section details the use of our Touch-tone and Student Online Services system.

It is an interactive part of the presentation as the presenter leaves the PowerPoint and connects via the network to the Student Online Services web page. The students are introduced to each of the pages they will use later in the day when they register. They are instructed in the use of Student ID numbers and PINS.

- The Advising portion of the presentation provides the students with insights to be used when building a class schedule. Since STAR is designed to service both transfer and professional/technical students and since there is a mix of both in each session, this section of the presentation allows for the pro/tech students to separate from the transfer students. They then gather in a breakout room with counselors to receive more in-depth professional/technical program information and move on to the registration part of their experience.

- Transfer degree seeking students continue their advising portion of the day and get acquainted with the Associate of Arts/Transfer degree. The remainder of the PowerPoint presentation details the language of the transfer degree exposing the students to the intricacies of distribution requirements and electives. They are then given an opportunity to ask questions and begin the registration part of the day. With the training they have received, many of the students take it upon themselves to register using either the Touch-tone system or the online web registration process. The students who need more assistance can go to the breakout room to receive help from the team of Advisors and Counselors.

The Planning and Research Office has tracked some effects that STAR is having on SCCC students. Data collected over three quarters shows a positive impact in retention rates for those students who attend a STAR session. For those students who first enrolled at SCCC in Fall 2000, the retention rates Winter 2001 were 73% for those who attended a STAR session and 52% for those who did not. Following the same students through Spring, retention for those who attended a STAR session was 58%, while for those who did not it was only 44%.

The STAR program will continue here at Seattle Central Community College because of the positive impact it is having on retention, enrollment, and the reduction in new student confusion. It is an excellent example of how many of the offices of student services, when working together, can positively influence the culture of this campus.

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Biotechnology Adapts to Changing Environment

by Mary Burnett

Over a decade ago, in response to the growing Seattle economic sector of biotechnology, Seattle Central Community College initiated a new two-year degree program in biotechnology. The biotechnology industry has grown to be one of the top five sectors for employment in Puget Sound, employing more than 20,000 individuals and projecting 27,000 positions by 2005. There are approximately 160 biotechnology and medical device companies in Washington State, with 44% of the companies founded in the last five years. The average entry-level annual wage in this career field for a two-year community college graduate is $30,000 annually. The majority of biotechnology companies are engaged in research and development, with a small number engaged in manufacturing of medical devices and pharmaceuticals.

Washington State is recognized internationally as one of the premiere bioscience centers in the world. This is due to companies such as Immunex, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Targeted Genetics, ICOS, Zymogenetics, and Cell Therapeutics. Also impacting this area is the research at the University of Washington and Washington State University.

What types of students enroll in the Seattle Central Community college biotechnology program? To answer this question, the Office of Planning & Research at Seattle Central, reviewed data on students enrolled in the biotechnology program from 1990 to 2000. Some facts about the Seattle Central Biotechnology students and program:

- 56% are female
- Average age is 28 years
- An average of twenty-two students enrolled annually
- Approximately 25% are transfer students
- Under 25% of the enrolled students earn the two-year AAS degree
- Peak enrollments in the program were 1996, 1997, and 1998

The program faculty, Dr. Steve Kudravi and Dr. Dee Dee Tilley, with members of the Technical Advisory Committee, reviewed this data and are making changes in the program for the 2002 academic year. The biggest change is that the first year of the program will be open entry. Students will need to complete courses in biology, chemistry, math, computer science and English at an individual pace. This was based on data that students are attending part-time (fewer than 8 credits) and taking three years to complete the program.

Upon completion of these prerequisite courses, students may enter the 2nd year core biotechnology courses. Biology 101 and 102 are being replaced with Biology 201. In addition, Washington State Biotechnology Skill Standards in Biotechnology are being integrated into 2nd year biotechnology programs. The curriculum is also being reviewed for documentation of student outcomes and assessment of learning. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee indicated that technical writing and public speaking are very important for employees in the biotechnology field. These skills will be emphasized through a 2nd year final research project that will involve not only technical writing but also a formal presentation of the research protocol and results.

The field of biotechnology is unique in that individuals can combine an interest in biology, chemistry, and laboratory research to focus on careers in research and development of therapeutic products, diagnostics, plant research, agriculture and animal research, informatics, contract manufacturing, and genetic testing. A related field is in forensic laboratory testing in law enforcement. The majority of Seattle Central Community College graduates are employed in research and development, with companies employing fewer than fifty persons. Increasing skills are needed in computer science and use of diagnostic and research software. The program continues to respond to the needs of the

students and the needs of the industries that will employ them.

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Career Task Force Takes Presentations to Classroom

by Christine Kirk

According to Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Spring 2000, students and their parents are interested in and tend to stay with an institution that focuses on the future careers of students. Given their financial investment in education, it is not surprising their concern about a role in the workplace is paramount. Our College Mission of providing opportunities for students to prepare for the world of work is in line with our students' focus on their futures.

In 1998 the Career Task Force was formed to bring together departments that assisted students with education goals, career planning and workplace preparation. In the past, these departments had offered workshops for students. Although they might appreciate the information, students were often too overscheduled to take advantage of them. The idea of taking the workshops into the classroom offered a solution. Members of the Career Task Force with public speaking and teaching experience volunteered to give workshops that fit the students' schedules.

Thus, at the request of an instructor, a representative of the Career Task Force would give a ten-minute presentation in the classroom outlining all of the career resources in the college. If an instructor was not able to teach for a day, or wanted a guest speaker, the Task Force offered fifty-minute presentations on topics such as interviewing skills, resume writing, business communication and politics, note taking, and networking skills.

After the presentations, students were offered interest sheets where they could write their names, e-mail or phone numbers and check off any career resources they were interested in getting. The Career Information Center would take the interest sheets and contact students with information on the career resources the students requested. A copy of the class roster from an instructor or department was acquired to track how many students requested career information compared to the number of students enrolled.

In a proposal to the Retention Response Committee, the Career Task Force stated the goal of contacting 70 students that expressed a desire for career resources from our presentations. The proposal was accepted, the Career Task Force was awarded $800 toward cost of printing promotional materials, and implementation began Winter Quarter 2000. The response was overwhelming. The Career Task Force gave 24 presentations to 399 students. 210 students or 53% requested additional career information.

It may take years to measure how the final impact of career presentations affect Seattle Central's retention. Whatever the impact, it will have been accomplished through a collaborative effort of classified staff members, faculty members, and administrators in a project that supports our Mission.

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Getting Perspective on the Math/Humanities Link

At the Seattle Central Retention Forum on May 21st, it was not surprising that, given the task of finding strategies for helping at-risk students through to the second quarter of college, lots of people suggested linking courses. We have a long history with learning communities and linked courses, and we know they provide students with more coherent programs of study and a greater sense of community within the academic institution. So several of us suggested linking courses, especially linking Humanities 150 to a content course and especially to one in which at-risk students might not succeed, like math. On Friday, May 25th Annie Galarosa, Bobby Righi, and Susan Chin talked to Valerie Bystrom about the ups and downs of teaching in Humanities 150 and Math 084 and 085 links. They, too, think such a link helps students succeed, but they have some cautionary advice as well.

Valerie: Here now are Annie Galarosa and Bobby Righi.

Bobby: I want to say that this is not a new idea. About three years ago at one of those state mandated discussions about success and enrollment, I suggested linking Humanities 150 to a Math 084 class. It is actually an old idea, and it came from the math department even though now the department is fairly reluctant to do it again. But I did teach Math 085 in a link with Annie's Hum 150 two years ago.

Annie: That would have been fall quarter of 99. The following year I linked with Susie's Math 084.

Valerie: Annie, why did you undertake the link and how well did it meet your expectations?

Annie: My motivation is actually shared by other counselors who traditionally teach separate college orientation and study skills classes. We found the enrollment had started to drop, even though we felt all along that to be successful, students, especially at risk students, needed these classes. They needed to know how to navigate through the system and how to locate resources. And they needed the basic study skills: how to take lecture notes, how to take tests, etc. These classes used to be taught independently, but when I saw the Ways of Knowing proposal and saw that philosophically it focused on the student as learner and asked students to think about themselves as learners, I thought, "Why can't we infuse those little one, two, and three credit skills classes into the Ways of Knowing class?" My other motivation was that this class would give students credits towards distribution in their AA degrees. We speculated that the reason for the low enrollment in skills classes was that most students viewed them as not transferable or credit bearing for the AA degree.

After Bobby suggested linking math and a Ways of Knowing class, Carl Waluconis and others actually came up with a grant, born out of all of our retention talks. So a lot of the people came together to say, "Well, lets put in a little bit of money to motivate faculty to come up with something." So this is what we came up with. Two faculty members stepped up to teach such a link and got the specific training for Ways of Knowing. In the fall of '99 I linked with Bobby, and the following fall quarter with Susie. It was nice for us to meet periodically. But, that was the part that didn't work too well because our schedules are always so busy. I would have preferred to meet with my math counterpart instructors a little bit more than we did.

Valerie: Did you attend the math class?

Annie: I did. Twice

Bobby: I think Annie came to see what was being required of the students.

Annie: Yes, I was less interested in what was going on with the class than in what was going on with the students. And so I would make comments later like, "Well, I didn't see anybody talking notes!" Of course, sometimes I got distracted and got interested in what she was writing on the board.

Valerie: Having the Hum 150 teacher attend the math class also might be detrimental. Ways of Knowing stresses student-centered writing about what they learn in another class, and if the Ways teacher were in the other class, it might seem that the students were trying to get the right answer about what was going on rather than report their own learning.

Annie: That's exactly how I viewed it. Hum 150 is a support class that is about my empowering the students to figure out what they are not doing and what they can do better so they don't fall apart in the math classes. Bottom line, it usually boils down to good old time management. It's the lack of awareness of the time commitment and the time investment. But somehow if these issues are infused in another class, and you talk about them, and you approach it from the philosophy that you, the student, are a learner and you are responsible for your own self, a student finally kind of admits that, yes, this is my responsibility. And without feeling that they are being preached at.

Even the students we were not targeting had to admit that their study skills needed work. Even though, cognitively, students could tell you what it takes to be a successful student, it was partly my being the nag: "Here is your time schedule. Did you really do this?" One of the tools is the journal, and there they were being accountable to themselves, not me; it was a reality check they did for themselves. One student reported that she didn't like small groups because she thought the other students were really a drag on her. She learned patience, learned how other people view a subject, how it teaches them to be tolerant; all these things they reported in there journals. Both math instructors also stressed the importance of attendance. Periodically they would get points toward their total score for being there. So students understood their attendance is important in success.

Bobby: For me, one of the reasons older students tend to do better is they have a lot of self-knowledge. We don't know how they get that. Students seem to go in one way and come out a little bit different. I wanted that to happen. Students need to learn when they know something. They think that after they have done twenty homework problems, they must know it. There never is the question, "Now I did that, do I know it?" They don't know how to ask that question. And having Hum 150 helps them to do so. Students wonder: "If I do this fine on the homework, why can't I do it on the test?" That was a big question for me, as the teacher, too. Not everybody in my Math 085 class was in Annie's Hum 150, but those that were did learn a lot about themselves, and it got reflected in math class, and I think it was a really good experience. I think the students in our class got melded together. I enjoyed that quarter.

Listening to Annie, I thought of a lot of big pitfalls, and I think we've had some. There is this whole question of faculty relations. I think of why I get such resistance when I suggest that math teachers link with a support class. Well, suppose we do make a lot of links. Who would get to teach with whom? Well, people would get their feelings hurt big time when nobody would want to teach with them. The person they want to teach with doesn't want to teach with them. You don't just casually do this. Like learning communities that are enforced: "You will teach with this person." Uh hunh! It's just not going to work.

When you link, the person doing Ways of Knowing has to teach these students how to survive the math or some other class. It is not Annie's job, nor did Annie do this, to go and tell the other teacher what he or she should be doing, or vice versa. Once you step over that line, then you are getting into big trouble as well as giving the student an out. How do you help students survive? Put the power in their hands. It is not just, "The teacher was terrible so you're just in terrible shape." It is, "So what do you do in this situation?" There is that aspect--if you place the blame or responsibility on the teacher, it removes the power from the student.

Annie: One of the students mentioned that. Here is what she says:

The greatest thing that happened in this class that helped me in math was a discussion the class had one day. Everyone was grumbling and whining about how hard math is and how long it takes to do the homework and blah blah blah. Sitting in the back of the class listening to them made me realize that we can't expect math to change so we can learn it easier; we must change. I decided first to start with my attitude. I thought, "Get over it." There is no way to get around doing it again so I . . . might as well learn the basics better this time around.

Bobby: At the retention meeting I realized a number of things on the wall had something about math, and I was reading the same week a scholarship application. Someone wrote, "I finally made it through math." "Ah," I thought, "I am a teacher of the thing that gets everybody!" I firmly believe that everybody at our school with normal mental capacity can think quantitatively; people do.

Annie: They don't realize when they are.

Bobby: It is a different kind of study skill. You do have to study a little differently than other things. You can be creative; in fact, you must be creative, but I think in a way you have to know yourself more. You have to be a little more introspective. That is not at all what students think. I am not saying that the math curriculum shouldn't change. I have been working on that for a long time. But students have been taught, have been led to believe, that they can't do math, that it is an alien form of thinking. It is not easy for a student to change that belief.

There are other problems. For instance, targeting at-risk students. One instructor did not do this model, but linked a Math 081 class to a studies skills class. The whole class was at-risk students; there were no students to model how you do it and succeed. There was not a student in the class who took good notes, asked good questions, and set the tone for the class.

Annie: I was the person who taught the skills class. The instructor told me it was the worst class to teach. I felt bad. Here is the missing link. Mine was a two-week one-credit orientation class--a little band-aid fix-it thing. The math instructor got the brunt of it. Indeed, at risk students bring with them all these issues, many personal in nature. I only had them for two weeks, and the math instructor had them for the quarter. We did not provide the support system that was necessary, and that is the missing piece. At-risk students are on our campus; to me the failure was that the support system was not setup as it is in a link class in which students actually bond and form a community. The key thing is that students get to know themselves. As Bobby said, in the link they get to know themselves. When people do the introspection thing, it does create this locus of control. It didn't happen in the band-aid class, and they just got to being assertive, even aggressiveness and inappropriate. They had the attitude, "It is everybody else's fault but not mine." And they were bringing all their personal problems into class. And it was a quarter from hell. Better is a smaller class, or a real skills class; it is not a good idea to do just a little one-credit link.

My Hum 150 class might be described as group counseling in action. When students ask what Ways of Knowing is, I tell them it's a philosophical applied psychology class. It's nice to read in their final self-evaluations that they really found value in this link.

Bobby: So your curriculum included study skills, plus journal writing about their learning in another class, plus lots of community building. If we go ahead with more links we need to sit down and talk about Hum 150 and compare tools. I think the journal writing is important. The humanities class should be a safe place for students to just vent, to say what they think the problems are, a safe place to really go into why they are having trouble, and maybe they feel it is the teacher's fault.

Annie: But I still have to teach them, "Well that's the reality. How do you survive this? If this is something beyond your control and my control, what is the next strategy?" The next strategy is to make yourself better. That is my philosophy that I share with them. Recognize your weaknesses and let's strengthen them. People have a tendency to focus on their strengths. And then they become unbalanced, so I use a lot of metaphors. For example, "How is being like water being adaptable?" You want to be balanced.

Bobby: I think what goes on in this humanities class is important. I know I will have a hard time selling this to the math faculty because it's gotten a bad rap for other reasons. What about a class like this for any student in 084? They would all be in any Math 084 but not all in the same class. **(And Susan enters the room! They always say that on "Mystery." She joins the interview.)** How would that work from your point of view? Say you had three or four teachers and that they knew they had some students who would benefit from Hum 150.

Annie: Well, we would have to figure out logistically how students would get in. I am always willing to experiment. It would become a different thing. Some of the continuity is having the students do problem solving; whether Susie knew it or not, as she would give them problem solving assignments in her class, I would give them time in my class to work on them. You would not get that continuity.

Bobby: But we all pretty much follow the same curriculum time-wise--when we do linear equations,

when we do graphs. What if all the students were in the same class but not the same section?

Annie: That could work because a byproduct would be mixing students. Again, a real significant piece that a student shared with me is their learning to work with other people. Group work is taught in both classes; if they don't learn it from one, they will from the other. Now here is what one student said, and it is a compliment to Susie:

. . . one positive learning experience has been group work in Math 084. Ms. Chin randomly assigned people to work with each other every day on what we have been learning . . . . Well, I didn't like the people she put me with. . . . The point is, time passed and Ms. Chin assigned new groups. Now I realize that it was important for me to work with all different kinds of people, not just the ones I like. My responsibility in the groups is still the same: to work together to resolve the problem.

I hear these complaints from CSP classes. So I smiled.

Susie: At the beginning of the quarter, for the first two weeks, I let them sit wherever they want, but I warn them that I will be changing groups (I rotate groups about every 3 weeks). I say, "I pull your name out of a lottery so it's not up to me - it is up to the heavens. I know some people want to work with their friends but you will learn from working with different people and watching how other people problem solve. Sometimes people come up to me after class and say, "Can you hurry up and choose new groups?" Or some others say, "I really like my group; could you not change for awhile?" If you just let them choose groups, some of the really shy students get marginalized because they don't know how to get into a really good group, and the strong students just get together and get better and not the weaker ones. I do group work at the end of the hour so even if they can't stand each other it is only 15 to 20 minutes that they have to put up with each other. And one should be able to put up with anyone for 2 to 3 weeks. I also like to rotate students so everyone gets a chance to sit in the front of the room.

Bobby: It is a true fact that when people are not getting hired, the employers may explain, "Fine, they know a lot of math, they can do the work, but we won't keep them; we won't even hire them, because they can't work with other people." Students have to learn to do that.

Valerie (to Susan): What is it you hoped your students would get from the link you taught with Annie?

Susan: I believe there are a lot of study skills that students need, and it's important they gain these skills. When I first came here and I was doing two Math 081's the first quarter, I thought, "These people really need to know how to take notes and do their homework, and it would be really nice if they could be taking study skills during the first two weeks." I recall talking with Wadiyah about it. In Math 081 some students didn't know they should copy down the homework assignment. Many of these people had been out of school for many years. So when Annie first approached me, I asked about a study skills class with Math 081.

No one likes to teach a class where there are too many problems in one classroom. If you focus on people who have already taken 084 two or three times, the weaker students, and you put them all in one class to link with Ways of Knowing, you are increasing the likelihood of having a problematic class. I am not sure it is good to put all people with a lot of problems in one room. Other students have to deal with it, and it's a lot of stress.

But one never knows ahead of time what kind of class you get. For example, this fall I had a Math 081 that was right there. They were more mature than students in my other classes; their homework was done better than in one of my Math 084 classes that quarter.

Annie: The support class needs to be a class that lasts the whole quarter so I have time to deal with all the issues to help them develop their ability to work in small groups, to gain an internal locus of control so that they don't blame any outside force for their not getting through the math.

Another thing I haven't mentioned. Teaching in the link, I was able to give permission to certain students who needed to unlink. I wasn't suggesting that they weren't going to get through the math. But because of poor decisions made in terms of their time management, it really was better for them to pull out of math. They wanted to stay in mine to learn all of these other things, and two quarters down the road they have had Math 085 and Math 098 and ended in the high 3.0 to 4.0 level.

(Another advantage to having students in a cohort group is they come back and report to me about what is going on.) These were students who thought they would never, never get through the math. Psychologically they had been convinced they would never get through math. But it helped their confidence level to be given permission to say, "Well, sometimes there is a time when you shouldn't be in a math class; wait until you get your focus together, until you've established your study skills." One student I had to pressure and convince that working and taking eighteen credits including this math class was not a healthy choice.

Bobby: They think that if they have time in their schedules to be in the class from ten to eleven they can . . . .

Annie: Magically get through it!

Valerie: Given the suggestions about linking Humanities 150 offered at the Retention Forum, what recommendations do you have for people who might implement them?

Annie: Now in hindsight we are discussing it, but a critical thing to do is sit down and have an understanding between the two instructors, to discuss the things that didn't work before. Luckily, Bobby, Susie and I have the same style, so it turned out to be fairly compatible. A key ingredient is sit down and talk about what the expectations are. Everyone does have a different style about them, and it's good to bring that to the table right away.

Susan: I think it would be better if Ways of Knowing did not link to a specific Math 084 but that any 084 could make referrals; any 084 students who needed it could be there.

Valerie: So you want this to be a class into which you can refer students?

Susan: Maybe during the first week.

Annie: I would be willing to do that.

Susan: That would be better than just to say, "Let's earmark this class for all the students having difficulty learning math." That would be a stress on the students as well as on the teacher! Our class had good distribution by accident.

Annie: And it's good for students to see a role model among themselves. A couple weeks into the quarter we could spot the ones who could be model students. An older student helped the younger ones calm down, and they helped him with the math. He had the discipline but they had the math skills. They started sharing their skills. It worked out well.

If we were going to experiment with in-fluxing, the only thing we would have to ask administration is, in the beginning, in case the class didn't fill, if we are waiting for the referrals, they can't cancel the class.

Susan: And it would have to be offered in the afternoon because Math 084 is taught at every hour in the morning.

Bobby: There is sometimes a class in the morning. Of course, one class would not be enough for all the students who might take it.

Susan: I can give Annie five minutes on the second day of class to come in to each 084 class.

Bobby: I think this class is very important for a lot of students. What was said in retention is a good idea, but it does not anticipate the difficulties of doing a link. Linking will not work with very many combinations of people because of the reasons we talked about--trust, teaching styles, but I think it would be good to think of this class with Math 084. I don't think that Math 084 is the problem with retention. But I do think it's a hard step for people to take who have not gone to college before. Perhaps they didn't do well in math in high school. There are a lot of flags to pick to say, "This would be a really good class for you to take that would help you." How would we recognize a student who could benefit? One class is not enough. There are other classes that are big steps for students who haven't been in college before: English 101. Maybe there could be two or three sections each

focused on a particular content. Maybe science.

Annie: When I have interviewed students from other Ways of Knowing classes, there is that same changed student, meaning that they have developed this sense of responsibility, a feeling of confidence, and an internal locus of control.

Bobby: I think we should continue to have conversation about this because I don't want to see it just die. I'm thinking we just wrote, and hopefully are going to get, an NSF grant; we focus on trying to get more students to take Engineering courses, and math, and particularly students under-represented in these fields. This is a great class to say, "You are starting, you are in 084, and even if you may never want to go into science, Hum 150 is a class that is going to help you explore how you do; there are so many ways this class can help you." I like the idea of linking the humanities class to a class in another subject. I like the idea of having students be free to talk about their classes. Students can talk about how they think they are doing in math, and how much trouble they are having, and the teacher is not there to say, "Oh, I didn't realize you didn't know as much as I thought." So the students aren't risking anything. They are not risking their math grade by talking about how they are doing. They can also say if they don't like something the math teacher is doing, and I am sure they do that. It is up to the Hum 150 teacher to put the power back to them to say, "That isn't the issue; the issue is what are you going to do about it."

Susan: I think you have to be careful. There is a line. I would never use my class time to have a student vent about another teacher. I wouldn't feel comfortable linking with a class in which that is allowed. I think the other teacher has to be very careful about where that line crosses into being unprofessional.

Bobby: That is what happens in an SGID. A student can say what ever they want to; that is what I mean about trust.

Susan: But an SGID is an evaluation of the instructor. Linking with another class has nothing to do with evaluation of the instructor.

Valerie: On the other hand, students who are in a class are always evaluating the instructor. It would be somewhat odd if you said in a Ways of Knowing class, talk all about this class but don't mention the instructor because that would be unprofessional. They have to figure out how to make it through.

Susan: I am saying, teacher-to-teacher, I have a slight problem with that; it's a fine gray area. If one is not careful, it can easily turn into a situation that is unprofessional.

Annie: I can understand where you are coming from; I am trying to get other counselors interested in this class because they have the skills to honor your concerns. But Ways of Knowing focuses on student learning and not on teachers. It is kind of an SGID.

Susie: But if I had any idea that this was like an SGID, I would never have gotten into it and I will never do it again.

Bobby: But if the student is saying, "I am having trouble writing this paper and she gave this horrible assignment," it's, "How do you handle this?" If a student says, "I can't read what the teacher wrote on the blackboard," and then the humanities teacher focuses on that and says, "I will see what I can do about that," that's wrong. It is how the humanities teacher handles it.

Annie: I ask them, "What are you doing about it for yourself as a learner. It's time you did something about it." We try to teach them to ask the right, appropriate questions.

Bobby: This strategy of linking Hum 150 to a content course is very hard because who do you trust enough to do this with? And you trust Annie enough.

Susan: Because I'd known Annie for twenty or thirty years, I felt that I could be up front with her about my concerns.

Bobby: So just saying "link these classes" isn't going to work because there are not many people

you'd be willing to do this with; you have to trust the person you teach with.

Annie: As I said, the two faculty members have to sit down and get those expectations on the table.

Editor: After the interview, because Susan was not present during the first hour of this interview, she would like to add this comment.

Susan: If a partial SGID is embedded in this link, then for me, it crosses professional boundaries, and I would not support such a link. Another concern of mine is the confidentiality of student grades. I do not discuss my grades with other teachers and this includes the teacher I am linking with. Each teacher is responsible for their own grading. The link should not be focused on how the math teacher grades ... that would also cross professional boundaries.

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English Department Retreat: Ideas for Retaining Students

by Douglas Cole

How do grades and our assessment of students' writing abilities affect retention? How do we fairly assign grades to a piece of writing? How do we decide, from a piece of writing, whether or not a student should move on to the next writing level, and how do these decisions affect student retention? If we decide that students need more help outside of the classroom, what kinds of support can we provide? And what kinds of program changes might we make that will promote student retention? At a recent departmental retreat, we considered these questions directly and came up with some proposals to address these issues.

One of our first activities was to discuss grading. To consider the issues more deeply, we conducted a "norming" session, using our own rubrics and a few "generic" sample rubrics. We read sample student essays and then discussed our assessment of the papers and the criteria we use in order to assess merits and problems of the essays. Of course, we had some differing aesthetic opinions, but overall, we were in agreement on the quality of the papers and what sort of editorial needs the papers had.

How to assess these papers as final work which would be used as a means for determining a student's advancement to the next course level, however, was a much more complicated issue. We concluded that more norming sessions are necessary. The goals of these sessions would be to continue communicating how we assess, which will not necessarily create complete parity in grading, but will help achieve a consistency which will be fair to students and their experiences in the program. This sense of fairness, we concluded, would enhance retention.

In addition to grade norming, we discussed assignments and activities we had used that we felt were critical in terms of a positive, meaningful student experience, which in turn would lead to retention. Consistently, we found that activities that involved groups and promoted students' meeting outside of class were effective in facilitating student success. We also concluded that one-on-one contact with students was a probable motivator for student success and retention. We will continue to collaborate on innovations and activities such as these with the hopes that we will create a program that makes use of all its strengths.

We followed up the norming session and the collaboration on retention-related class activities with a discussion of minimum grades and how they can or should be used in regard to student advancement. Are they accurate reflections of students' abilities in future classes? If not, are they barriers? Or, are they valid standards which must be observed to ensure that students who move into higher-level classes won't find themselves overwhelmed by workloads and writing assignments that they will not be able to handle? We came up with several possible models, some using exit exams, some using minimum grades, others using portfolios. These models will need more discussion before any one or combination of models is put into place. Whatever model or combination of models our department eventually adopts will have as its basis the fair treatment of all students in our program.

Before any policy of minimum grades can be implemented, we concluded that a certain amount of support needs to be in place for students. One of these is a Learning Center. Both as a drop-in tutoring center with a writing lab and as a "Skills Shop" with variable credit courses that can work in conjunction with other courses (not just English), a Learning Center is one of the best ways we can think of to enhance student retention in the program if not across several programs. We envision something that could be near or within the library, in order to make use of its resources. Some of our group noted that retention at the North and South campuses is slightly higher than Central's, and that each, in fact, has a learning center with up-to-date technology and abundant support staff. We cannot logically conclude that their Learning Centers are the singular cause of higher retention; however, we hope that a Learning Center vigorously integrated into existing programs, along with

our other proposals, will provide the kind of additional support that will result in higher retention.

Another crucial element in making our program an efficient, coherent program for our students is an English Department Coordinator. Once again, at the recent District-wide English Retreat, we realized that both North and South campuses have such a position. Could this position have any effect on higher retention? Once again, we cannot be certain that there is such a relationship. However, we have designed such a position, using the job descriptions from the two other campuses and tailoring them to meet our campus' needs. We hope that such a position will clarify our program in the minds of our students. It would provide a contact person and create a kind of commonality with other campuses in the district so that students will feel they are receiving the same quality education here that they would receive anywhere else. In addition, a coordinator's job, specifically, would be to oversee the smooth running of program operations already in place (such things as scheduling, hiring adjunct faculty, mentoring...) and would give time to research innovations in pedagogy, as well as provide contact with other programs and campuses. With such a position, we hope to see our program become a part of the retention solution.

At the end of our retreat, we concluded that none of these proposals can really work in isolation. Minimum grades cannot be seriously considered without creating the kind of support that a well-designed and well-run Learning Center would provide. Moreover, a coordinator position will only enhance program continuity, collaboration and innovation. We will continue our discussions, our grade "norming," and our departmental retreats so that we will continue to not only find ways of addressing retention but also grow as a program with a vital, relevant curriculum and positive, meaningful classroom activities for our students.

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View From the Director's Chair

Tina Leimer, Director of Planning and Research

Linking planning and budgeting is an issue most public colleges have to work at. One of the mechanisms Seattle Central uses is PAC, the Planning Advisory Committee. According to its by-laws:

> "PAC advises the President on issues related to strategic planning. It is the campus body that reviews annual budgetary requests and makes resource allocation recommendations to the President. PAC reviews and advises at each phase of Seattle Central's annual planning cycle, which includes environmental and institutional assessment, goal setting, strategy formation, and budget allocation. PAC also evaluates the planning process at the completion of each yearly cycle."

That's a lot for one group to do, and in practice, it doesn't do it all. PAC's primary task is reviewing annual budget requests and making recommendations to the President. Through forums and retreats, the college community sets the goals. The Structural Planning Coordinating Team, the various planning groups, and the Planning & Research office are primarily responsible for the other tasks (see previous article on our planning process).

With common links between these groups, information is readily exchanged and fed into PAC discussions. Seattle Central's President leads the planning process, sits on the Coordinating Team, and is an ex-officio PAC member. The Director of Planning & Research chairs PAC and the Coordinating Team. PAC members are representatives from across the college: nine faculty members, five classified staff members, three administrative/managerial members and two students. Besides serving on PAC, many of these members participate in one of the planning groups.

PAC's process assures that planning goals are considered in their recommendations. The committee meets monthly, except during spring quarter when the upcoming year's budget is being developed. Then it meets twice weekly, or as often as needed. The President and the Business Office give the committee an overview of the budget situation for the year. Then senior managers present and discuss their budgets. During fall and winter quarter meetings, planning group leaders update PAC on progress toward goals. The plan is reviewed, as is any relevant data. Budget information is shared, and the committee discusses college issues that are significant to its task.

For the last few years, PAC has based its budget recommendations on these criteria:

- Congruence with Seattle Central's Mission, Values, and Learning Outcomes
- Congruence with Seattle Central's Institutional Goals

- Support or maintenance of enrollment and recruitment
- Support for fiscal responsibility

That, though, was when the committee had funds to allocate. This is a different year. The state of Washington has a budget shortfall that could require community colleges to make anywhere from a 5% to 20% cut in their permanent level operating budgets. With such deep cuts looming, PAC felt the need for more specific criteria that could be used to review our college operations. They were also concerned about making cuts without including corresponding attempts to grow. So they recommended that our college "seek additional revenue sources to support our needs rather than relying solely on reductions."

In order to lay the groundwork for this goal, PAC developed two subcommittees. The first investigates potential alternative forms of revenue, or "revenue rivers, " as they refer to it. This committee is co-chaired by a PAC member and a member of the Coordinating Team. Participants are both PAC and non-PAC members of the college community. The other subcommittee is developing budget review criteria that PAC will use this year to try to make their recommendations as objective as possible. This committee too includes some non-PAC members who expressed interest in the topic.

Reminder to the Seattle Central Community: PAC's minutes are regularly posted in our internal campus public folders (All Public Folders/Central Campus/Structural Planning/PAC).

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Update from the Curriculum Review Committee

Laurie Kempen, Curriculum Review Committee Chair

This quarter has been a productive one for the Curriculum Review Committee. We had several new courses proposed, performed a major program review, and continued to simplify the course establishment process.

The course proposals were as follows:

- BIO 161 – Human Genetics
- ECO 201 – Macroeconomics (revisions submitted for global studies credit)
- ITL 291 – International Studies – Humanities and Fine Arts
- ITL 292 – International Studies – Natural Sciences
- HUM – 235 Holocaust Literature: Voices of the Holocaust.

All of the courses offered challenging curriculum, but there were several questions regarding both international studies courses, which were not approved. Look for the other courses in the schedule for spring of 2002—they were all accepted and will strengthen our campus offerings.

The work involved in simplifying the course establishment process included making the online application more user friendly and reducing the number of forms required for a course. Thanks to the efforts of Mike Taylor and the committee's revisions, the updated forms are now ready to be uploaded to the web at the following address: http://dept.sccd.ctc.edu/crc.

Our program review for this quarter was the library. The faculty and dean put together an exceptional review, which was thorough and well organized. The review showed how successful the library has been in implementing changes suggested by students, faculty, staff and the CRC's previous review process. In fact, its responsiveness to student and faculty needs was what impressed some of us the most. Library goers have a number of convenient ways to express their needs and ideas: in a suggestion box, online, in student evaluations, and after workshops. Some examples of changes that have been implemented as a result of these various means of evaluation are extended hours for students and more online accessibility. The major technological changes that have been made in recent years are extraordinary. It now has a state-of the art web page, many more computers available for individuals and classes, greatly expanded online holdings, and an extensive collection of pedagogical CD-ROMS.

Other strengths of the library were the collaboration and flexibility of faculty, their commitment to diversity, and a successful online course. Library faculty collaborate regularly with each other and librarians on other campuses. They are technologically equipped to meet the needs of disabled students. One particular course requires students to access diverse materials, as well as having them reflect on how the course could be more diverse. Perhaps this is why the African-American enrollment is higher in library courses than in humanities courses as a whole.

There were very few recommendations to be made, but some questions were:

- What can be done to assist non-native speakers of English so their passing rates can be improved?
- Is there a reason why Native American students haven't enrolled in library courses?
- Is there a need for even more extended hours for the library?
- What can be done to assist students who are currently receiving an NC grade, so they can complete the courses?

Although all program reviews are available at the reserve desk of the library, some committee members suggested that it would be useful to have examples available online, especially for those preparing reports for the first time. So, the past two reviews—Library and Business, Languages and Cultures—will be stored in a public folder on the exchange server, where our meeting minutes are already available.

Our upcoming program reviews are as follows:

- Winter 2002: Engineering and Computer Science
- Spring 2002: Political Science
- Fall 2002: Accounting
- Winter 2003: Sociology
- Spring 2003: Geography and History

Finally, a note to the campus community: The winter and spring quarter deadlines for new and revised courses are January 22 and May 14 respectively.

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The Retention Response Team: From the Perspective of Student Success

Karen Michaelsen, Library

At the heart of the College's mission and values is the goal of student success. The Retention Response Team was formed to facilitate student success, with representatives from all parts of the college, including students, staff, faculty and administrators. As we began our work last year, we immediately recognized the need to identify and acknowledge what was already helping retention. Gradually we formed a vision of a learning college where all members of our community work to improve student success. While we recognize the good work now done by individuals, programs, and divisions, we know that in order to achieve this end, there must be a more comprehensive effort to ensure it.

Our first strategy was to survey the college community about current retention activities, to identify barriers, and to suggest initiatives to improve retention. The process has generated an impressive list of accomplishments: Basic Studies faculty and staff go the extra mile to look out for the interests and needs of their students; STAR orientations help students find their way through the maze of registration; Welcome Back Daze volunteers help reduce the confusion of new beginnings; Critical Moments helps underrepresented students build community; the list goes on. Our reflections on this process led to another strategy: The Retention Forum, held last May 21st. There, participants were invited to see all our work as a vehicle to promote retention, whether it is calling the student who has stopped coming to class, making sure we have enough sections of critical courses, or keeping the restrooms clean. We all have a part to play.

As I was gathering information for this article I had to ask myself: what am I doing differently because of my work with the Retention Response Team? The college-wide retention survey led me to initiate conversations among the whole library staff about how we serve students and how we can ensure that our policies, procedures and attitudes are student-friendly. This process led us to look at the library differently. We're not just providing an isolated service; we're part of the campus team. How we integrate our services with other services on campus matters. My reflection on the changing perspectives among library staff led me to speak to other members of the Retention Response Team to learn of their experiences. Here is what I learned:

Bea Kiyohara, chair of the Retention Response Team, sees herself in the role of facilitator. She is continually educating the administrative staff and her peers about retention and believes this has led people to think about retention as they solve problems. Bea observed that many retention efforts already in progress are not labeled as such. She believes that by pulling the threads of these efforts together through our implementation plan, our efforts will lead to still greater success.

Pat Hughes, a staff member in the Humanities and Social Sciences Division, has developed a handbook for new part-time instructors, including a guide to the bookkeeping part of retention (such as dropping no-shows and following up on students who are missing class). She also provides tips for communicating with students, promoting a positive learning environment, and easing end-of-the-quarter stress.

Christine Kirk, Program Coordinator for the Career Information Center, sees many potential students come

into her office. She is coordinating with the Admissions and Registration offices to work with students who register for the STAR orientations. She calls students who have listed their goal for attending as 'undecided' and invites them to the Career Information Center to assist them with career exploration.

Tina Young, Director of Multicultural Initiatives, believes that she is not necessarily doing anything differently as a result of the Team's work, but that because of it, connections between the projects she coordinates have been strengthened. She cites as an example the Critical Moments project, which imbeds retention and success of underrepresented students in its goals. As a result of a math case story developed by the Critical Moments team, a small group of math faculty met to talk about the case story, learned more about the project, and shared their initial dialogues about retention of students of color in math classes.

Lexie Evans, Dean of Student Development Services, piloted the Call Center this fall. This project uses Student Ambassadors to contact prospective students and to provide telephone follow-up for first quarter students. The project may be expanded to train Student Ambassadors to become mentors for new students.

All these initiatives help retain students, but they also reflect changes in attitude from the perspective of student success. We may have been recognized as "College of the Year," but we can't let that go to our heads. There is still work to be done. Each of us should consider how our role in the college community contributes to student success. Watch for news about student success initiatives and answer the call for participation.

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How Decisions Are Made to Implement Technology in Enrollment Services

Carlos Williams, Director of Enrollment Services Information Technology

In recent years technological enhancements such as web admissions applications, Touchtone telephone and online registration, Student Online Services (S.O.S.), and document imagining have kept the Admissions and Registration Office at the forefront of innovation. Such additions have made it possible for us to keep pace with the demand for better service and reduce costs at the same time.

Technology is no stranger to Enrollment Services. Since the introduction of the HP 3000 in the 1980's, technology has been an integral part of Admissions & Registration. Those of us who work in these areas (not to mention other essential areas in the enrollment process such as Financial Aid, Advising, & Testing) are keenly aware where we would be without technology to help us admit students, create registration appointments, generate degree audits, enroll students, and generate grades. Routine functions aided by technology support the college's efforts to provide educational opportunities for those students who choose to attend here. Because of this attitude, a culture within Enrollment Services has firmly taken root that embraces technology as a positive force in our daily work.

However, what is not often discussed is the way in which we arrive at implementing a particular technology. Who is involved in the process? Is the mission of the college taken into consideration? Are students involved? I will walk you through those steps at Seattle Central, focusing primarily on Admissions & Registration.

Innovations such as Touchtone Registration and Instructor Brief Case are so far-reaching in their scope that representation from both Instruction and Enrollment Services are needed to effectively implement the technology. Other advances, such as the Admissions Module or Web Admissions, which are limited to serving students, have a scope of input that is not as broad.

Ideas for new technology often come to us from a variety of sources, such as colleagues at other institutions or from the Center for Information Services (C.I.S.). Student and staff input play an important role in how ideas are brought to the attention of decision makers. Because they are those who use the technology, they are often the first to become aware and give voice to a particular need. For example, the idea to register students by telephone probably did not originate in the mind of an administrator sitting at his or her desk, but rather in that of some poor student, standing with an enrollment form in hand at the end of a very long line. Or, perhaps it was a front line staff person longing to do something more meaningful than imputing item numbers and processing endless piles of paper. You see, necessity IS the mother of invention.

Once an idea is presented, there is a vetting process that involves students, staff, and

administrators. It's at this phase that critical questions are asked, such as:

- How will this technology serve students? (Will it empower students to be better critical thinkers? Will it make them more self-reliant?)
- How will this technology serve staff? (Will the technology enable staff to work smarter and not harder?)
- How does this technology support the mission of the college? (i.e. how does Touchtone Registration support the college's mission to be "diverse, accessible, responsive, and innovative?")
- How does this technology support the institutional effectiveness of the college?
- How easily can the technology be maintained?
- Do staff members have the appropriate skill sets to utilize the technology to the fullest extent?
- Can we afford it?
- What are the appropriate timelines to implement the technology? (Will the timeline be sufficient to train staff? What will the pilot process look like?)

Often before this process takes shape, internal discussions are already underway as to the viability of the proposed technology and its potential to either better serve students or staff or both. In addition, the approval of both the Vice President of Enrollment Services and the Vice President of Student Services is sought if the technology is going to have any chance of being successfully implemented. These administrators are often called upon to articulate the purpose of the technology from an institutional standpoint. Their positions within the institution assure those involved that the technology under discussion will have a fair hearing. Both VPs are key players when implementing the technology requires additional funds, more staffing, or the cooperation between their respective divisions. Both VPs also serve as a check and balance as the process moves through the approval process, which is why they are brought into the process at its inception.

The process from idea to implementation can take from one to three quarters depending upon how broadly the technology will be applied, and what kind of funding, staff/faculty training, and publicity we have. This long lead-time provides us an opportunity to introduce new technologies to the campus in phases, so that potential glitches are discovered using manageable populations. It also gives us the ability to determine the efficacy of new technologies that are user-friendly, accessible, and reliable.

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Responding to the Student Voice: Using Assessment to Improve Technical-Professional Programs

Bob Groeschell, Coordinator of the Social and Human Services Program

Like other professional-technical programs, the success of the Social and Human Services program is dependent on a sustained rate of new enrollment intakes coupled with effective student retention. In an effort to strategically plan program improvements in both areas, baseline information was needed that addressed SHS student flow. During Spring Quarter 1999, a survey was developed by program faculty and administered by an SHS work-study student to all SHS classes. A total of one hundred fifty-seven confidential student responses were tabulated, representing over 90% of enrolled students. The survey contained six response areas:

1. Information/referral sources that contributed to selection of SHS classes (10 options provided)
2. Current educational objectives (specific SHS degree, certificates, courses, or AA)
3. Evaluation of information received from nine campus sources (point scale)
4. Evaluation of level of helpfulness of nine campus information sources (point scale)
5. Suggestions that would increase program enrollment (open ended)
6. Barriers to enrollment (open ended)

The data collected has prompted program initiatives over the past two years that have contributed to increased program enrollment and positive student outcomes. One major finding was that the two most frequently mentioned enrollment influences were past/current students, and place of employment. In response, the program has since published an annual newsletter to human service agencies as a form of direct outreach. A SHS Student Organization was formed to strengthen peer mentoring with new and ongoing students. The student organization itself has sponsored three agency fairs on campus in the past two years. The findings also supported a program change that resulted in SHS faculty directly supervising our field placement students. This places faculty in direct contact with our most influential referral sources.

The results also identified specific problem areas that interfered with recruitment and/or retention of program students. The telephone tree and web site were improved for new student inquiries. An annual course schedule was developed and published to assist students with long-range planning. College fairs and materials were developed to clarify post-graduation opportunities in academic programs related to human services. Transfer options are now addressed in both introductory courses in chemical dependency and social and human services. Information sessions specific to SHS were established, with stronger links between program counselor and faculty. Customer service issues identified by students were brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor of that area. Summer course offerings have been increased.

While institutional change at any level can be an arduous process, the ability to point to good data collected directly from students can serve to inform and persuade. Perhaps most importantly, students see improvements that are a direct result of their involvement, and perform accordingly.

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Just in Time: Feedback Via the Web

François LePeintre, Instructor of Computer Science and Engineering

As instructors we are striving to make the learning experience of our students a better one. We constantly try new teaching techniques. But how can we tell that an approach in or outside the classroom works well? One indicator is what students think of our teaching. Was the assignment interesting? Did it reinforce what was seen in class?

Technology can be helpful in order to implement simple tools that gather and analyze answers to such questions. I would like to describe some of the web tools that I am using to that effect in the computer programming classes that I have taught at Seattle Central over the past two years. I have developed these tools in PERL on a Linux server. They are simple and lightweight and can be easily customized from one quarter to the next to accommodate different classes.

Technology in my programming classes is used primarily to encourage students to learn both independently and collectively. Technology provides students with live demonstrations of course material in class as well as opportunities and impetus to work collaboratively at all hours of the day. Via the website, students may consult with each other, myself, and professionals in the field. They can give me feedback anonymously through online surveys. For example, homework assignments are turned in via the web along with a questionnaire that invites the student to reflect on the relevance of the assignment to his or her learning. Answers to the questions are automatically tabulated and formatted on the server. I know immediately if my assignment was well received, how long it took to be completed, if it was interesting, and the kind of improvements that I could make were I to use it again in a future class.

The following links will give the reader an idea of what is available to a student taking CSC 142, which is a Java programming class:

> http://www.seattlecentral.org/faculty/flepeint/javaclass (for the entry page)
> http://northstar.sccd.ctc.edu/scripts/sccc/java/help.html (for the bulletin board)
> http://northstar.sccd.ctc.edu/scripts/sccc/java/discuss.cgi (to give me feedback anonymously)
> http://northstar.sccd.ctc.edu/scripts/sccc/java/turninForm.cgi?hw=6 (to turn in a homework assignment)

I have found that getting continuous feedback throughout the course helps me meet the learning expectations of my students. I am able to implement relevant changes in the class as it progresses throughout the quarter, which meets the needs of those students currently taking the class. This is much more efficient than the traditional end-of-the-quarter evaluations, which allow corrections for the next quarter only, when the student population might be a very different one.

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Responsiveness in Action: Student Feedback in the Critical Moments Seminar

Loris Blue, Vice President of Enrollment Services

Critical Moments is a project that prepares students, faculty, and administrators to respond proactively to campus and classroom events that involve issues of race, gender, class and other differences through discussion of case stories based on extensive interviews with individual students. Under the auspices of the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education at the Evergreen State College, the project is being developed in a number of colleges and universities throughout the state.

At Seattle Central, the seminars are team taught, pairing a faculty member who is familiar with teaching methodologies with a staff member who is versed in student services, both having experience in facilitating dialogues. The fall quarter 2001 seminar was the third of the planned pilot courses at SCCC.

As the Critical Moments project evolves on our campus, one of the primary goals is to shape it to meet the specific needs of our students. For fall quarter, the seminar was extended from a weekly 50 minutes to one hour and 40 minutes. The expanded time frame was the most obvious response to the feedback received via student evaluations. The conscious and deliberate effort to recruit more men for the class resulted in a larger than expected class size, so the additional time was a fortuitous coupling. The extra time allowed for more of the participants—especially the more reticent ones—to be drawn into the discussions as well as affording opportunities to check and re-check for clarification and understanding.

Additional efforts to be sensitive and responsive to participants' evaluations were reflected in further revisions, such as the intention of the facilitators to monitor the discussions, discourage cross-talk and enhance the case stories with guest speakers and supplemental readings. Prior participants indicated that some of the case stories were too elementary. I found that the more complex and emotion-laden case stories required adept facilitation of the dialogue to avoid being at cross purposes with the skills goals: The students became so engaged that some lost sight of the goal of strengthening their social skills (listening, empathic responding, perspective exchange, etc.).

The way individuals construct knowledge and derive meaning from an experience cohabits with their particular expectations, perceptions and prior experiences. Nonetheless, it was anticipated that the fall seminar would result in a meaningful learning experience for the participants, though based upon feedback from a different cohort with different facilitators. And that is the challenge of assessment! This challenge does not suggest retreat or neglect. On the contrary, the feedback and subsequent re-tooling of the curriculum imbues it with vitality and relevancy.

And so, Paul Croon, my co-facilitator, and I solicited feedback from our collaborators that most likely will result in further refinements to this learning experience. The next facilitators will build upon these assessments and the subsequent group of students will be the benefactor of the collective and cumulative insight.

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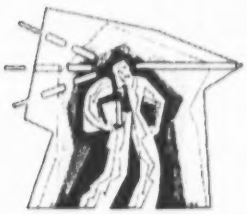
Connecting with Online Students



Shalin Hai-Jew, Communications and English Composition Instructor

Teaching online has been growing in popularity due to students' needs and technological innovations. Yet, student retention in online classes can be challenging. How can an online instructor truly connect with online students, support them in their learning, encourage community building online, and personalize the online learning experience? The simple answer to connecting well with online students goes back to the basics of teaching well. Following are some tips on how to do that with online courses

GET TO KNOW YOUR STUDENTS. ENCOURAGE THEM TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.
A **diverse group** of students take online classes. Some may have a tendency to stay in the background while others prefer a high presence online. It's important to begin getting a sense of the students right away. One way to do this is to have them post a short biography online. This way, the students may bond among themselves, and you can also acknowledge and welcome each student as you respond to their biographies.

BE YOURSELF.
One of the largest challenges to teaching online is to convey personality, energy, values, and compassion. Following are some ways to meet this challenge:

- Write lectures in your own voice.
- Add in some carefully constructed humor.
- Self-disclose intelligently.
- Respond to students' ideas regularly. Solicit their feedback. Take initiative in engaging them in 'conversations'.
- Post a photo if you feel comfortable doing so.

Another part of being yourself online is being there. Log on at least twice a day and address student questions right away.

FIRST WEEK(S) FLEXIBILITY.
For the first week, **provide online materials**, as textbooks may not have arrived. Be ready to **extend deadlines** for the first few weeks because of adjustments regarding technology, textbook challenges, registration issues, and other possible common scenarios.

STRUCTURE THE INTERACTIVITY.

- Much of the instructor's work for an online class is done in the course-building stage. During the writing stage, you will be anticipating needs and addressing those needs in the actual **structuring, organization of materials, writing, assessments and evaluations, and delivery of the course**. Strive to provide an **integrated experience** in which the textbook(s), lectures, class assignments, activities, course discussions, and other factors come together into a whole pragmatic experience.
- **Structure in weekly responses** to encourage student participation and set up the behaviors needed

for online learning success.

- **Set up** the **learning experience clearly**. Help students be able to orient themselves early on, in order to increase retention.
- **Explain** for students **the rationale** for various learning activities—so the students can mentally understand the meta-learning dynamics—and then engage learners with various learning styles. Use interactive learning strategies, so your students can **do and not only conceptualize** the materials.
- **Build your own personality into inherited online courses**, by adding content, assignments, readings, links, etc., while not disrupting the basic core of the course, which already meets particular rigorous academic requirements and transfer requirements.
- Use the technology **courseware** as a tool rather than the focus of the class and be thoroughly familiar with the software.
- **Bring in the Internet's wide-ranging potential** by using it for research, value-added learning, and added interactivity through listservs, newsgroups, electronic magazines or e-zines, downloadable files, webcam experiences, educational chats, online radio stations/shows. Let the students, many of whom have exceptional online savvy, provide leads to the class and discover new resources, in order to encourage more active engagement.
- **Hand-hold and provide support** early on. Provide as much information as possible online to address student needs: FAQs frequently asked questions), online manuals, instructor contact information, the online classroom structure, specific calendars with due dates, and so on. Don't accept student questions on your personal email; rather, have students post questions so everyone in the class can benefit
- Then, **be available** by phone, in person (e.g. in one's office), by email, in the online classroom, to address questions and provide support. Give contact information for **technology** support personnel as well as **registration, advising, counseling, student support, financial** aid and other staff. Have hard copies of materials available via mail or in other ways for those who may be having technological problems.
- **Provide samples of student work.** For project-intensive courses, having electronic portfolios of student work (with documented student permission to use it in that way) along with your evaluation of it would be useful for further clarification. It helps to use a range of topics and assignments in such a portfolio to open up students' minds to the possibilities.

BE OPEN TO MAKING CHANGES TO THE ONLINE CLASSROOM.

- **Be willing to revise the online classroom.** As you discover weaknesses in the construction of your course, be open to going back in to make changes. Use the **announcements feature** to update your students on what is going on.
- **Maintain tidiness** in the **threaded discussions** by setting up folders for each of the assignments and discussion questions.

ENCOURAGE THE COMMUNITY-BUILDING OF STUDENTS.

Encourage students to engage with each other mentally and form online friendships by having them do the following:

- Self-disclose some information (at their own comfort level)
- Post their opinions and experiences
- Share writing assignments
- Team up on various projects
- Work together

Set up **a culture of sharing and communications** by practicing and promoting netiquette (Internet etiquette):

- Writing full responses to people's ideas
- Keeping private information private
- Avoiding flaming (starting an online personal fight) and spamming (broadcasting commercials and ads online)
- Answering all emails in a timely fashion
- Not "hogging" public space/real estate online, etc.

Consistently encourage and model constructive online behaviors.

- If you use **collaborative teams** in the class, given the reality of student attrition, you'll need **shorter-term assignments and flexible teaming**—to allow for changes depending on the

circumstances. Address issues of **virtual** teaming—the need for strong leadership, defined roles, regular communications, possible face-to-face meetings, exploitation of various technologies (phone, fax, email, online work spaces, Netmeeting, etc.), the importance of project documentation, file sharing protocols, and other issues. Also, be engaged in your student team areas. Letting them know of your presence encourages their interactions.

- **Avoid negative experiences.** This means heading off any personal attacks or disruptive students. Address any potential problems or misunderstandings right away. Left to fester, student differences may escalate.
- If there are **occasions to meet** face-to-face (as during proctored tests or fieldtrips or in-lab experiments), make the most of those times to allow students to bond on shared projects. Help people put faces to the names.

KEEP ELECTRONIC COPIES.
Make sure to back up all the student assignments that you've corrected or responded to electronically. If a student has missed getting a response, you're able to pull up their file and let them know what they need to know.

PROVIDE REGULAR FEEDBACK AND GRADES.
Students need regular feedback and grades to know how they're doing in an online class. Your commentary should be comprehensive and constructive, so students will know exactly how to improve and get better results. Regular grades and a midterm and final grade report would be useful for students to know how well they're doing. Some instructors use the automated testing features that provide automatic grading on multiple choice and true/false option quizzes and tests. Having such feedback often proves reassuring to students.

Some instructors prefer to break up the work needed for a grade into various items such as participation (registered as answers to questions, interactions with others on threaded discussions); quizzes; short assignments; original essays, and a final exam, rather than relying exclusively on exams.

KNOW YOUR COURSEWORK AND FIELD WELL.
One of the most encouraging aspects of a class for students is having an instructor at the top of his/her field. An instructor conveys this in the following:

- Passion for his/her subject
- Being informed of cutting-edge changes and thoughts
- Participating in trips, research, publishing, partnerships, grants and other aspects in their field;
- Knowing others in the field, and sharing expertise
- Reading up on the latest journals and periodicals and online e-zines in the field
- Finding experts to speak on the field (yes, online!—for a mediated real-time experience for
- Sharing all with students as they are ready

And, last but not least, get to know the Distance Learning personnel on campus. They are there to provide assistance.

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SCCD Title VIA International Studies and Foreign Languages Grant: Globalization of the Curriculum Project

Tina Young, Director of Multicultural Initiatives

In 1999, the Seattle Community College District (SCCD) submitted an application to the Department of Education Title VIA International Studies and Foreign Languages program. The proposal was accepted and an award of $170,000 was granted for a two-year period (2000-2002). The goal of the SCCD Title VIA project is to "globalize" courses in the college transfer curriculum throughout the three campuses. This is being achieved through the integration of global components in approximately 40 existing courses, the development of new courses, and an expansion of world language offerings. The grant focuses primarily on introductory and survey courses for the broadest impact. In addition, the Title VIA project includes professional development workshops and the acquisition of new library materials to support new and revised courses.

As Year One 2000-2001 activities of the SCCD Title VIA project were completed (December 2001), 17 faculty from the three campuses successfully revised 17 courses and developed four new courses and five language courses. Six of the faculty from the Central campus—Jim Hubert, Charles Jeffreys, Jimmy Kelsey, Tracy Lai, Carl Waluconis, and Kaori Yoshida—had already completed 10 course revisions and developed three new courses, including a business language course. The Central faculty received a total of $14,000 in stipends from the grant.

To date, the courses that have been revised under the grant are:

- BIO 100 – Biological Principles
- BUS 101 – Introduction to Business
- ECO 100 – Survey of Economics
- ECO 200 – Principles of Economics: Microeconomics
- ECO 201 – Principles of Economics: Macroeconomics
- ENG 233Z – Coming of Age Across Cultures
- ENG 292 – Special Studies in Literature: Women II
- HIS 103 – World History: 1800-Present
- HIS 150 – Multicultural Experiences in the U.S
- HIS 200 – Critical Issues for the 21st Century
- HUM 101 – Humanities in Thought and Action
- HUM 102 – Humanities in Thought and Action
- Hum 103 – Humanities in Thought and Action with an ENG 102 link
- PSY 101 – General Psychology
- PSY 206 – Developmental Psychology
- PSY 215 – Abnormal Psychology

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GEG 100 – Introduction to Geography and GEG 205 – Physical Geography will be completed by the end of this quarter.

Nine new courses have been developed:

- ISP 120 – Introduction to Scandinavian Culture
- HIS 151 – Comparative Diasporas: Indigenous Perspectives
- CSP– Lessons from the Sea
- WWN 220 – Women in the Global Economy
- Five new language courses: KOR 101, KOR 102, KOR 103, Japanese for Business and Spanish for Business.

Of the combined holdings of the Instructional Resource Centers on each campus, approximately 20% of the collection contains materials with international dimensions. The SCCD Title VIA initiative has further encouraged the libraries to emphasize international acquisitions, including general materials to support an international focus of campus activities and specific acquisitions for the courses that are being internationalized and developed under the grant. To date, approximately 150 items (books, films, etc.) have been purchased for the three libraries with almost 60 of these housed in the Central campus library. Additional items are currently being processed to complete Year One activities.

Over the course of the academic year, four professional development workshops were presented to enhance the expertise of faculty in their disciplines so that they could effectively revise their courses. The first workshop, "Developing Intercultural Competency on Campus," took place on February 3 on the Central campus. This was followed by "Global Studies Learning Outcomes in the Classroom: What Works and What Doesn't," presented on April 9, also on the Central Campus. The third workshop, "Global Studies: What? What For? How?" was held on the North campus on April 18. A year-end workshop was presented on June 6 for all faculty who have or will participate in Title VIA course revisions and new course development activities. Close to 80 full time and part time faculty, staff, and administrators participated in these workshops.

The Title VIA Steering Committee, composed of faculty members Minnie Collins and Jim Hubert (Central), Wei Djao and Tom Kerns (North), and Joan Stover and Mike McCrath (South), has the responsibility of reviewing and evaluating for grant purposes the completed new and revised courses. These committee members have risen to this formidable task, devoting a considerable number of hours of reading, reviewing, and commenting on their colleagues' work.

Prominent among the activities for Year Two of the Title VIA grant are the revision of 22 existing courses and the development of five new courses, the presentation of five workshops, and the purchase of approximately $9,000 of library items.

The Title VIA grant has encouraged faculty across the three campuses to collaborate on internationalizing courses; engendered conversations focusing on curriculum development in a discipline—content, goals, methodology, outcomes—that would not have ordinarily taken place; strengthened discussion across disciplines; and prompted numerous faculty to consider developing new course offerings as logical extensions or sequences to existing courses. It has also encouraged many faculty to formalize and further develop the global content that they have been teaching in their classes for a number of years—inclusion of international sources, texts, books, and materials; incorporation of international comparative analysis; emphasis on multiple global perspectives, etc. This validation has led many faculty to seek additional curriculum development funding support to continue this valuable professional and disciplinary work.

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More Than You Counted On: Assessment of the Title III Technology Grant

Valerie Bystrom, Director, Title III Activity One

Here we are in the fourth year of our five-year Title III "technology" grant. Thanks to Title III-funded rewiring, the students in the computing center make Internet connections without fail. Title III funds equipped the Basic Studies computer lab, the Mac Lab for Visual Communications students, and the Library Instruction Lab, all working to capacity. More faculty members successfully teach new software on new hardware. Every evaluation measure required by the grant testifies to its success. There are, however, positive outcomes, which elude our evaluation, and, while unmeasured and unreported, they certainly count toward the grant's success.

For instance, while we count the number of faculty members who attend workshops to help gauge the success of Component 2, Faculty Technological Expertise, we do not measure the sense of empowerment, the new confidence faculty report after tutorial sessions with Katherine McDermott, our Title III "Information Technology Consultant." Cynthia Wilson in Culinary Arts explains that she attended a web design class but wasn't sure how to use the knowledge for instruction. So she met with McDermott, who showed her a sample course web site and talked about the importance of the first page, effective color combination, appropriate links, and personal touches. Wilson's assignment was to create a navigation bar and a plan for her linked pages. When she met with McDermott again, Wilson had lots of ideas about how her students could use the site. She prepared and browser-tested it with McDermott's help but will build sites for five other courses on her own. She adds that, while not wishing to brag, she could give her colleagues in culinary arts lessons in using this technology and help them build web pages. "I feel really good and a little special," she says. "I didn't think I could do this, but now I can. I love that we will be linked to the college website."

Similarly, Annie Galarosa explains that follow-up tutorials from an enthusiastic live person (rather than software) made all the difference when she tried to use Excel to get her grades out. "Taking a class doesn't quite do the job," she says. If a learner doesn't get to repeat and practice, doesn't get help with glitches and stalls, Galarosa predicts she will be overwhelmed, discouraged, and revert to pencil and grade book. Instead, Galarosa feels confident to use the program to fit her needs; she can open it and use it at home, for instance. The technological mystique dissipated, no longer so hesitant and scared, Galarosa wonders about teaching something online....

To assess the new Library Instruction Lab funded by Title III, we count the number of stations, the number of classes taught in the lab, and the number of faculty members attending workshops, and we determine student gains in information skills. None of these measures take account of the advances our librarians have made in teaching information literacy as a result of this lab. To begin, the configuration of the computers in the lab—set around the room facing the walls—lets the instructor see what is on each screen. No more talking to the backs of computers and the tops of people's heads, says Karen Michaelsen. With the central space open, not only are brief introductory lectures and demonstrations easier, but the instructor can circulate easily, moving from the computer/projector station to help a student who doesn't make it to the target website. Easy circulation led to more interactive teaching, she says. For instance, now students

regularly use the teaching station to demonstrate their search pathways, what and how they are accessed, how different sites work, and how to evaluate them. In this lab, instructors and students feel more engaged in teaching and learning.

Further, the possibilities of the new lab complemented the librarians' web savvy. Previously, Ian Chan a website for each of his library classes; he now maintains a template to customize for any class and keeps a set of particular useful links. In fact, every presentation he makes is a web site. Adapting some online teaching strategies, rather than simply hanging information on a website, the librarians experiment with making it interactive. Lynn Kanne's site includes interactive pieces, which allow students to practice what she is teaching. For her and other librarians, some kind of interactive web-based teaching is routine. If their experiments lead them into cyber thickets, Chan is usually able to pull them out. What our evaluation process does not measure and what SCCC has gained from this synergy of computer-confident librarians and interactive lab is something like a Technological Experiment Station: a group of especially capable people pushing the envelope on what can be done with classroom web-based interactive instruction.

To evaluate the success of a very different Title III project, student information kiosks, we again count—the number of kiosk queries checked against previous numbers of student information requests of staff. (The latter has dropped from 16,000 to 1,000.) We do not measure, however, the decrease in the length of the lines, the number of students who do not wait to get a copy of a schedule, to make a change of address, to get grades. The lines have simply disappeared. Nor do we measure the resulting decrease in stress, boredom, and frustration among students who are no longer in line and staff who no longer feel its pressure.

Similarly, to measure the success of computerized testing, we count the number of tests administered. Of course, these are necessary measures. But they do not capture the benefits of what is a much more efficient enrollment process. That is, previously, a student would appear, see an admissions officer, return days later to take placement tests, return again days later to find out the results. Now, students can take their placement test on the same day they walk in the door, and the results are nearly instant. Ron Kline "We can make their first meeting an enrollment." Unmeasured is the decrease in student upset and frustration with the admissions barrier. Unmeasured is the increase in staff morale: Kline explains that work at student services is "a lot more fun to come to everyday. We don't fear seeing the student who has been banging his head against the wall."

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Perceptions of International Students in a Community College-Based Coordinated Studies Program

Andrea Insley, Dean of the International Education Program

During the Fall Quarter of 1999, a Coordinated Studies Program (CSP) was offered at Seattle Central Community College with a unique mix of students. This particular CSP class was comprised of approximately half international students from countries such as Brazil, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Japan, China, Taiwan and Sweden. The other half of the class was representative of Seattle Central's "local" diversity. A study was conducted which ultimately ended up in the form of a doctorate dissertation, presenting an in-depth exploration of international student perceptions of this coordinated studies program.

In conducting this research project, a phenomenological research methodology was used. Qualitative data were collected through participant observations, focus groups, document review, and individual in-depth interviews with nine students. The data were analyzed systematically and categorized into the following four themes: (1) program integration, (2) program content, (3) program structure, and (4) program faculty. Data within each theme were then grouped under sub-categories and themes were presented with examples of students' statements to illustrate each theme.

For most of the international students in the study, the sense of supportiveness and relationship development opportunities were the most important features of the experience. International students were able to build relationships with both American students and other international students through prolonged cross-cultural interaction in and out of class. The international students valued the cross-cultural learning and the introduction to American culture the CSP context provided.

The interdisciplinary nature of the CSP was, in general, viewed positively, though, for many students it was a big stretch since these types of learning strategies may not have been experienced in the past. Of the various activities in the CSP, international students regarded the small group work as the most rewarding of the in-class activities, and also enjoyed the out-of-class group projects and social activities.

Overall, international students found that the coordinated studies program provided a unique and positive educational experience. Of great importance, students found that the experience was beneficial in addressing both social and academic areas in their lives.

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